

Application Number 10/565953
Response to the Office Action dated April 28, 2008

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1-8 have been rejected on the ground of nonstatutory double patenting over claims 1-7 and 11 of U.S. Patent No. 6,911,025. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant notes that the priority application for the reference was published before the filing of the priority case of the present application. Neither the claimed or disclosed subject matter of the reference suggests the invention of claim 1.

The '025 patent claims an inner cap retained at the front end side of a male type connector (see claim 1) and a plurality of engaging legs extending from an outer edge portion of the ring-shaped portion (see claim 3). An engaging convexity is formed on the engaging legs so as to protrude inward, and engaging concavities are formed on an outer surface of the front end portion of the male type connector so as to allow engagement with the engaging convexities (*id.*). Because the engaging convexity protrudes inward, the engaging convexity engages with the engaging concavities of the male type connector from the outside (see Figs. 1A-E, 3, and 5A of '025). Accordingly, the engaging legs of the inner cap projects out onto an outer side of the male type connector (see Fig. 3 of '025) and the engaging legs would interfere with an insertion of the female type connector and a rotation thereof (see Figs. 1F and 9A-E of '025). In contrast, claim 1 of the present application requires that the engaging convexity of the engaging legs of the inner cap be inserted into an inside of the front end portion of the male type connector so that the convexities of the engaging legs engage with the concavities of the male type connector from the inside (see Figs. 5A-C, 7A-C, and 8A-D of the present application). By engaging the convexities of the engaging legs with the concavities of the male type connector from the inside, the engaging legs are located within the male type connector and accordingly, would not interfere with a smooth insertion and a rotation of the female type connector (see Figs. 7A-C and 8A-D and page 18, lines 16-22 of the specification).

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Therefore, claim 1 of the present application is distinguished from the '25 patent, and this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-8 have been rejected on the ground of nonstatutory double patenting over claims 1-12 of U.S. Patent No. 7,083,605. Applicant respectfully traverse this rejection.

The '025 patent is a continuation-in-part of the '605 patent and claims similar subject matter. Like the '025 patent, claim 3 of the '605 patent requires that the engaging convexity of the engaging legs extending from an outer edge portion of the inner cap be formed so as to protrude inward and the engaging concavities be formed on an outer surface of the front end portion of the male type connectors. Because the engaging convexity protrudes inward, the engaging convexity engages with the engaging convexity of the male type connector from the outside (see Figs. 1A-E and 3) as discussed above. Therefore, for at least the same reasons discussed above, claim 1 of the present application is distinguished from the '605 patent, and this rejection should be withdrawn.


In view of the above, Applicant requests reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance.



Dated: July 22, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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